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REPORT  
OF THE  
SUPERINTENDING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

OF  
FITZWILLIAM,

For the Year ending March 11th, 1845.

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BOSTON:  
S. N. DICKINSON & CO. PRINTERS.  
1845.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted at the annual town meeting in March, 1845.

*Resolved*, That the \* \* \* \* \* Report of the Superintending School Committee receives our hearty approval; and that it is expedient to have 400 copies of it printed—one copy for each family in town, and the rest for general circulation, and that said committee superintend the printing.



## REPORT.

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The Superintending School Committee for the year ending March 11th, 1845, submit the following annual Report.

Believing that very much depends on an efficient superintendence of schools, we have endeavored, as far as possible, to acquaint ourselves with the best modes of managing and teaching, that we might be able to recommend such improvements, as in our judgment the wants of schools seemed to require.

We have at all times, by suggestions and appeals to the higher sentiments of parents, teachers, scholars, and prudential committees, used our best efforts to impress upon each and all the importance of a well disciplined, thorough, and efficient common school.

The duties, to us, have been pleasant and agreeable; and, as far as it depended upon us, we have aimed to render the laborious task so to the teachers; and we have been gratified to think that our various suggestions have been well received, particularly by the teachers. But few if any considered themselves above receiving instruction and advice.

### *Examination of Teachers.*

The first official duty which we were called upon to perform, was the examination of teachers for the summer schools, on the 11th of May. Ten of the thirteen employed in summer, promptly presented themselves on the day appointed, — all of whom we approbated.

The remaining three living at a distance, and not commencing school at the time, were not present, — three only of the prudential committees were present.

On the 16th day of November, we had a public exam-

ination of the teachers of the winter schools: eight of the twelve were in attendance, and but one of the prudential committees — this we regret. Every prudential committee should be present with his teacher, and know, as far as the examination can show it, whether his teacher is well qualified: and should the application of the teacher be rejected, he may judge for himself whether the Superintending Committee acted the part of wisdom and sound discretion. Some two or three years since, at an examination of a class of teachers in this town, the Committee saw fit to reject the application of one of the number. The Committee who hired him being present, was perfectly satisfied: saying, ‘if the Committee had given him a certificate he should not have kept the school.’ We aim to notify every agent and teacher, and wish to see them all face to face.

We consider it our duty to do *more* than to satisfy ourselves as to the qualifications of teachers in the various branches to be taught; — we think it a proper and convenient time to impress them with the responsibility of the office; to acquaint them with our views of their duties to themselves, their pupils, and the parents in the districts; and to suggest such modes of discipline, training, and instruction, as may have occurred to us as best calculated to insure the greatest benefit from their labors — so, that if the agents attend and hear the remarks, and believe in the utility of them, they are better prepared to assist in carrying them into effect.

For the thirteen summer schools, we had twelve teachers. Six of them only belonged to this town.

For the twelve winter schools, we had twelve teachers, — six male, and six female. Eight of whom belonged to this town.

### • *Examination of Schools.*

All the schools were examined by one or more of the Committee at the commencement of each term; except that of No. 4 in the summer, the winter term in No. 11, and the close of No. 12 in the winter, — making, if each one had visited the schools assigned to him only, 50 visits; but we have been in company enough to increase the number to upwards of 100 individual visits.

The law of the State requires the Committee to 'visit each school twice at least in each year.' But we think a thorough supervision requires more than that. Indeed, so thoroughly are our people convinced of this fact, that parents are not satisfied, and teachers think they are neglected, with only one visit a term. We have, as in previous years, made it a point to get as many of the teachers out to the closing examinations as possible; frequently furnishing conveyance for them — believing, that to bring the *ordinary* in contact with the *good*, will have a tendency to raise the qualifications of the former, while the latter may be confirmed in any excellences which they may possess. And we are confident this has had no little influence in raising the character of our teachers.

Your Committee would say, that whenever they have been on official duty, and been *hungry*, or *dry*, they have never found the *latch-string* pulled in. A large number of visitors out of the districts, were hospitably entertained at the closing examinations in winter, in Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5 — and numerous other invitations to dine or take tea were extended to your Committee, some of which we did, and others it was not in our power to accept.

### *Condition of the Schools.*

#### DISTRICT NO. 1.

#### HENRY SHIRLEY, *Prudential Committee.*

There was one term of eight weeks in this district in summer, taught by Miss *Abby G. Piper*, of Dublin; with whose management and success your Committee were well pleased, — and were we to particularize any branches, we would name reading, spelling, and penmanship. When a pupil missed a word in spelling she had some invisible sign, which we could hardly detect, signifying to the class that they were all required to spell the word. Of penmanship she appeared to be master — and there was good proficiency in all branches. This term was the last kept in the old school-house; and most superbly was it ornamented with evergreen and flowers, not only inwardly, but outwardly; an elegant bower having been

erected on the outside, leading from the street to the entrance.

The *winter* term, of ten weeks, under the care of Mr. *Levi Harris, Jr.*, also gave good satisfaction. The teacher appeared to have labored incessantly for the benefit of the school; having met the scholars in the evening to teach penmanship, that it might not interfere with other studies. Taking into consideration the size of this school, 66 the whole number, 56 the average attendance, comprising scholars of all ages, with a great portion of them small, it must be obvious that here is a fine opportunity for a teacher to display his industrial talents. We think that the pupils have made good improvement in distinctness of utterance or articulation, which has long been needed, but there is room for more.

This term was kept in the *new house*, erected the past season; and your Committee could but notice the improved appearance of both teacher and scholars, when transferred from the old house to the new. Each scholar having a seat wholly to himself, 'with none to molest or make him afraid.' Although this house was erected through much tribulation, yet, considering the increased advantages, we think the district can have no cause to regret it.

We also commend the good sense of the district in purchasing Miller's patent ventilating school-house stove.

#### DISTRICT NO. 2.

DAVID FULLAM, *Prudential Committee.*

The summer term, of eight weeks, was kept by Miss *Sarah M. Hill*. We were well satisfied with the order and discipline of this school, and with the harmony and good-will existing between teacher and scholars; and there was some improvement. Still there was a lack of spirit and activity in the teacher, necessary to gain the attention and interest the pupils.

We are aware that this is a small school, and that it requires greater efforts on the part of the teacher to dispel the monotony and listlessness liable to insinuate itself into the school-room with but few scholars. Yet *life, spir-*

it, and activity, must exist in teachers, or they will fail, measurably, of being successful.

The *winter* term, of ten weeks, was taught by Mr. *Franklin Kendall*, whose *caliber* was better fitted for a larger school. Though the improvement in the various branches was very good, many of them peculiarly so, exhibiting satisfactory evidence that the teacher had labored hard, and done as much as could have been done by any one in the same time; yet, in the opinion of your Committee, small as this school is, greater advantages might have accrued to the district, by prolonging the term, if they had employed a competent female.

#### DISTRICT NO. 3.

RUFUS B. PHILLIPS, *Prudential Committee*.

The length of the summer term in this district was ten weeks; and under the instruction of Miss *Tryphena F. Collins*, who gave good satisfaction. The various studies, as far as they were pursued, were well recited.

At the closing examination, it was evident that labor had not been a stranger among them.

The *winter* term of ten weeks, taught by Mr. *Joseph A. Penniman*, was, as usual under his care, good. Specimens of drawing maps on the black-board, and the knowledge they exhibited of geography and arithmetic was praiseworthy. There was but one circumstance at the closing examination to mar the pleasure of your Committee; which was, the crowded and uncomfortable state of the scholars and visitors in the ill-contrived old school-house.

We very much regret that the district have refused to build, the coming season.

#### DISTRICT NO. 4.

ARTEMAS STONE, Jr., *Prudential Committee*.

The summer term, of nine weeks, was taught by Miss *Evelina Merriam*, of Athol, Mass. This is one of the smallest schools in town; but the teacher succeeded admirably in awakening an interest in the pupils.

She was not only well qualified, but interested herself in the business. Every recitation was good. We regret exceedingly that the same teacher could not have taught the winter term also, which was taught seven weeks by Miss *Augusta Giles*, of New Salem, Mass. This teacher, though well qualified in the various branches to be taught, was the exact opposite of the summer teacher in those requisites necessary to render the services of a teacher most valuable.

#### DISTRICT NO. 5.

##### DEXTER WHITTEMORE, *Prudential Committee.*

There were two schools in this district, with two terms of eight weeks each. The Upper School was under the instruction of Miss *Elizabeth Patrick*, of Athol, Mass. All scholars of seven and over attend this division of the school in summer, and ten and over in winter. The first term of the school was not what we could have wished; owing, mainly, to a want of activity and interest in the teacher. But much improvement, in these particulars, was manifested the second term. Many of the recitations were good; one class in grammar particularly so. More spirit and zeal was exhibited by the teacher.

The Lower School was taught by Miss *Sarah C. Tylor*, of Keene. The scholars under seven, in summer, and ten, in winter, constitute this school. It is sufficient of this teacher to say, that she has had charge of the same school *ten* terms, and that the district and committee have implicit confidence in her ability to teach, and interest in the employment. There is one fault connected with this school, as well as some others in town, which should be remedied. In the opinion of your Committee, children under four years old should not be permitted to attend school, particularly schools as large as this, as they do, for the avowed purpose of 'getting them out of the way.'

No parent, who sends them there, expects that they will learn any thing; and they frankly acknowledge the fact. But then, 'the child wishes to go, and it is so much trouble at home.' But if they do not expect them to learn any thing, they have no right to send them there, to har-

ass and vex the teacher. If a mother cannot take care of one or two such children, and pursue her regular vocations, how can a teacher manage eight or ten, and do justice to the rest of the school? Let those who advocate the sending of children so young, go and sit in the school-room *one day*, and witness the anxiety and trouble they cause the teacher, and our word for it, if they have one 'drop of the milk of human kindness' left, they will send them no more. Nor is this all; it is a positive injury to the child, to confine him as closely as good order requires, six hours a day, when it is as much his nature to be in almost constant motion, during his waking hours, and as necessary to the full development of all his physical powers, as is respiration to sustain life. This school, with the same teacher in winter, in consequence of the sickness of the pupils, kept only six weeks, and during a portion of this time many of the pupils were constantly absent.

The Upper School, in winter, taught by Mr. *David C. Chamberlain*, of Jaffrey, a graduate of Amherst college, gave good satisfaction. We were well pleased with the attention bestowed upon the fundamental branches. A neglect of these we believe to be a serious fault in our common schools.

In this school, the cause *why* and the reason *for* were insisted on. Particular attention was given to *articulation* and *defining*, in connection with reading.

We would here remark, that teachers of a collegiate education, when they are not *above* their business, and are willing to descend to the capacity of the pupil, have great advantage over the teacher of more common education, for the reason that they have acquired a vast fund of information, by reading, which the ordinary scholar does not usually obtain, and which, if employed as it should be, may be of great benefit to the school.

#### DISTRICT NO. 6.

JONATHAN WHITTEMORE, *Prudential Committee*.

The summer term, of fifteen weeks, exclusive of vacation, was taught by Miss *Caroline B. Baker*, of Troy. So



far as the Committee can speak officially, the school appeared successful. Their deportment was every way praiseworthy, and the progress of some of the scholars was very apparent; and there prevailed that air of briskness, so frequently a desideratum in small schools, which would indicate, that as the teacher shall increase in the knowledge and experience of the vocation, she will prove an able and efficient instructor.

Your Committee are sorry to feel called upon to speak of a matter which seems to be operating to the injury of this school. They refer to the unharmonious feelings of some of the parents of the district.

It must always be an occasion of deep regret, whenever private differences or jealousies are permitted to come within the doors of the school-house. Of all places, let that nursery of our children's characters be kept free from the prejudices and animosities which will but too surely beset them in their future course. Such feelings, in a school, must be productive of the worst consequences. Scholars will be arrayed in opposing factions; and the teacher, especially if inexperienced, will be very liable to say and do things which will give umbrage to one or the other of the parties.

In this way, the feelings of all, which should be manifested in the kindest reciprocations of interest and regard, will become, through their heightened sensibilities, but as wormwood and gall. It is easy to see, that, under such circumstances, the work of education cannot successfully go on; the usefulness of the school must be very much impaired, if not totally destroyed.

Your Committee do not know — they have not deemed it advisable to ascertain — where the blame may lie; and they do not refer to the subject as in any way rendering judgment in the premises. But they feel impelled by a sense of duty, to kindly call the attention of the district to the subject; trusting that we all feel that nothing ought, in any way, to interfere with the high and solemn duty of educating our children.

They confidently appeal to the good sense of the district, for the entire banishment of the evil. This district, being composed in part of inhabitants of Troy, the winter



term was, according to usage, under the supervision of the authorities of that town; consequently does not fall within our province of remark.

#### DISTRICT NO. 7.

BENSON WHITE, *Prudential Committee*.

In this district there was one school in summer, of six weeks, taught by Miss *M. Elizabeth Spaulding*. Though this term was short, we were satisfied that much good had been accomplished; and, as far as we had the means of judging, the district were well satisfied with the school. The recitations in geography and reading were worthy of commendation; and all the recitations evinced much interest in the pupils, and energy on the part of the teacher.

The winter term, of eight weeks, was taught by Mr. *Lysander Perry*, of Richmond. This is another school that might have been taught, to good advantage, by a female.

This teacher was faulty in not being sufficiently familiar with the studies to enable him to be as correct as a teacher should be. Still he had some redeeming qualities, which, if a teacher possesses, we can overlook many errors. His manner was well calculated to address itself to and gain the attention of the pupil to the subject under consideration. Consequently, we found a good degree of improvement, when, under other circumstances, there might have been an entire failure.

#### DISTRICT NO. 8.

LEVI BIGELOW, *Prudential Committee*.

This school was taught, both summer and winter, by Miss *Sarah B. Richardson*.

The summer term was nine weeks, the winter twelve and two thirds weeks in length.

Very general satisfaction was given, both terms. We do not say *universal*; there was a complaint, by one or two individuals in the district, during the winter term, that all was not right; and your Committee were called in, not by the complainant, but at the instance of the agent and

teacher, to inquire into the affair; and, after hearing the evidence on the part of the complainant, as well as in behalf of the accused, we were unanimous in the opinion that some improprieties had been committed by some inconsiderate boys, for which the teacher was not responsible, but whose parents, on learning the facts, we have no doubt, took the proper course in the premises.

This district owes much to their teacher, for her unwearied exertions to promote the interest of the scholars. The recitations at the examinations, both summer and winter, were good. Reading was better attended to than ever before. The recitations at the closing examination of the winter term, were so arranged as to interest without wearying; and a more interesting examination was never, to the knowledge of your Committee, had in No. 8. This teacher has taken much pains to acquaint herself with the business of teaching; having attended almost every meeting of the Common School Association, the past season, despite the darkness of night or the storms of winter.

#### DISTRICT NO. 9.

WILLIAM DEAN, *Prudential Committee.*

This district had a short term of five weeks in summer, taught by Miss *Maria F. Kimball*: the first of her teaching. With a term as short as this, there can be but little visible improvement; the pupils can do little more than get under way. But enough was exhibited at the close, to show that the management was good. The pupils were prompt in their answers; the teacher active and energetic; and when she shall have had more experience and acquired more confidence, will make a valuable teacher.

The *winter* term, of 11 weeks, taught by Miss *Jane Richardson*, was very successful, and gave entire satisfaction to both parents and pupils; and we can speak of it in warm commendation, as showing a union of interest and feeling between teacher and scholars, that could not fail of rendering the school valuable.

The recitations at the examination were very commendable; one small class in history the best we ever heard.

This district has been unfortunate, in years past, in having had their schools broken up by sickness. But they seem determined to retrieve their loss by increased attention and vigilance. The winter term was kept in the new house; which is so good, compared with the one they have vacated, that we do not know as we ought to find any fault with it. But if we can be permitted to make a suggestion, we would say, that it should have been arched and had a ventilator — in other respects it is a very good house.

#### DISTRICT No. 10.

THOMAS SWEETSER, *Prudential Committee*.

The summer term of four and a half weeks, the shortest in town, was taught by Miss *M. Elizabeth Spaulding*, who gave very good satisfaction; indeed, with a term as short as this, there could not be time to find fault with the school, were any body so disposed.

The discipline of the school, was well calculated to call forth the intellect of the pupils.

In the winter, Miss *Betsy D. Perry*, of Royalston, taught seven and a half weeks with good success; thirteen of the seventeen scholars, attending this winter, were constant during the term.

#### DISTRICT No. 11.

H. PRESCOTT HAYDEN, *Prudential Committee*.

The summer term of six weeks was taught by Miss *Perry*, also. She has had charge of this school several terms before. This shows that she has had the confidence of the district, — and your committee are satisfied that she has labored faithfully and with success.

The winter term, of five weeks, was taught by Mr. *Ephraim Richardson*, of Royalston. From his appearance when examined, and the satisfaction expressed by the district, we presume he did what he could in so short a time. At the time appointed for examination, the committee were all engaged, so that it was not convenient for any one of us to visit the school.

It will be observed, that the schools in this district and No. 10, are very short. The school-houses in both districts are in a ruinous condition, and the two districts being so located that they could be conveniently united, we had hoped it would have been done. The advantages of a union can hardly be appreciated, except by those who have ocular demonstration, by visiting the different schools.

#### DISTRICT No. 12.

HERMAN FISHER, *Prudential Committee*.

This school was under the care of Miss *Lydia Burbank*, both summer and winter; and, so far as we had the means of judging, gave good satisfaction. The summer term was six weeks in length and the winter the same; but would have been some four or six weeks longer but for the sickness of the teacher. We were extremely well pleased with the manner and management of this teacher.

She was perfectly familiar with her books, and used one but little in hearing recitations.

We have examined a male teacher, to keep the remainder of the winter term, from whom we have not as yet any report.

#### CLASSIFICATION.

One great hindrance to the progress of our schools is, the imperfect classification of scholars.

We know, that, constituted as our schools are, and must be, perfect classification cannot be had. The sparseness of our population will not permit them to be sufficiently large to allow the pupils to be divided according to age and attainments. But there should be an attempt, in relation to classification, to approach as near perfection as our circumstances will admit. If parents do not see to it, teachers *should*, and, if both neglect it, committees, at the opening of the term, should examine thoroughly into the matter, and *strongly* recommend a judicious arrangement into classes. Pupils are too often left to their own freaks and fancies in taking up particular branches, when they think best; without any recommendation, or

perhaps permission, of their parents ; and should the teacher remonstrate, and recommend some other study, with a view to a suitable classification, he is at once met with the answer, ‘father wants me to study this.’ Let us suppose a case, one not of uncommon occurrence. Six scholars attend the same school, of about the same age and attainments ; one takes up History and Colburn’s Arithmetic ; another Geography and Grammar, another Algebra and Philosophy, and so on, with the whole six. Here, then, we have six pupils, who may as well be in the same class, requiring the teacher to hear two or three recitations a day only, when, under the arrangement which they have thoughtlessly entered into, the teacher is required to hear twelve, with one or two pupils only in a class. Under such circumstances, it is obvious that the teacher’s duties are greatly increased, without a corresponding benefit resulting to the pupils. Every thing must be passed over in a hurried and imperfect manner.

### READING.

We do not purpose, at this time, to enter into all the minutia of that which goes to make an elegant and accomplished reader ; such as accent, emphasis, cadence, inflection and modulation of the voice ; — but to speak of one or two faults, in this connection, which, of all others, should be reformed. Of all the branches taught in common schools, we believe this has been most neglected ; yet it is the foundation of all others, and without which they cannot be pursued successfully. But what we wish to speak of particularly, is *articulation* and *understanding* reading. We find on examining schools, that the articulation of a great portion of scholars is very indistinct ; so much so that a listener to the exercise, without a book to look after, can get no sense whatever of what the scholar is reading ; it is a mere stream of sound, so to speak, running from the mouth of the pupil, without any division or subdivision into syllables and words. The pupils do not learn to give each letter and syllable its full and proper sound. The different combination of consonants are almost always slurred over. We have urged upon

the teachers the necessity of teaching children to *talk*; of training the vocal and enunciatial organs, and forming the habit of perfectly distinct enunciation.

But the great obstacle in the way of obtaining the greatest amount of knowledge at our common schools, has been a neglect to make *understanding* readers. Until within a few years a *Dictionary* was very seldom seen in the school-room, for the use of the scholar.

Call upon a great majority of scholars to define a word that occurs in their reading lessons, and they can no more do it than they could '*sing* a demonstration of the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid.' Whence arises the great diversity of opinion in science and religion, but the want of a knowledge of language, to enable us to understand the force of reasoning presented to us by public lectures and through the various books and periodicals of the day. We have a book, called the Town Officer, wherein the duties of most officers are laid down and explained, but how many of us can take that book, and by reading, *understand* it sufficiently to do the duties of a *school-district clerk*. The following anecdote, illustrative of the point now under consideration, was related by one of our teachers, in a lecture before the Common School Association the past winter — 'A father was reading an account in a newspaper of a man that fell from a tree to the ground and instantly *expired*; — a little son, who heard the incident read, said, "father, did he die." "I don't know," replied the father, "the paper don't tell."'

The following extract, from the Seventh Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board of Education in Massachusetts, shows the superiority of teaching this branch in the schools of Scotland over those of our own country.

'There are some points in which the schools of Scotland are very remarkable. In the thoroughness with which they teach the *intellectual* part of reading, they furnish a model worthy of being copied by the world. Not only is the meaning of all the important words in the lesson clearly brought out, but the whole class or family of words, to which the principal word belongs, are introduced, and their signification given. The pupil not only gains a knowledge of the meaning of the leading words contain-

ed in the exercise, but also of their roots, derivatives, and compounds; and thus is prepared to make the proper discriminations between analogous words whenever he may hear or read them on future occasions.'

Until the pupil is required to do this, and to read understandingly, he is unprepared to enter deeply and profitably into any other study.

If we will but teach our scholars the meaning of words, as they are found in their reading lessons, we shall make a stride and arrive at a point in education which is rarely reached. We have said to the teachers this year, teach your scholars to read, to understand *what* they read; neglect any other, every other branch if you will, but do not neglect this.

### PENMANSHIP.

Quite as much improvement was made in this branch as in former years. In No. 5 it was, as heretofore, taught separately. Mr. *John P. Sabin*, taught a term of three weeks, before the opening of the winter school; and the improvement exhibited at the close of the course of lessons was very striking. The specimens were, almost uniformly, written in a bold, legible hand, — which, compared with the feeble, illegible scrawls of some previous years was very gratifying. We attribute the improvement shown here, to the fact that the pupils have been required to write more coarse or large hand than formerly. But as a general thing, there is not that progress in the art of writing which there should be. We have found that most of the teachers know nothing about the elementary principles.

### QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS.

By the remarks and quotations we are about to introduce under this head, we mean no disparagement to our own teachers. On the contrary, we think they will compare favorably, *very* favorably with those in our vicinity; and are quite as good as public sentiment has demanded; as good as we have any right to expect,



considering the measures which have been taken to qualify them. But, as we have before intimated, there are some teachers wanting in energy and vivacity, without which they cannot secure the attention of the pupil; the recitations are too much a matter of form and peculiarly fitted to *scatter*, rather than *concentrate* the rays of the mind.

We take the following extracts from the 'Seventh Annual Report of the Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education,' already referred to, and we do it hoping that they will be read by some teachers, who will never see that Report.

We are aware that the justness and even *truth* of portions of the Report of the Secretary are questioned by some; but we believe, whoever has given the subject of teaching a careful examination, whatever he may think of that Report, will acknowledge that a great majority of the teachers of our own country fail of accomplishing that amount of good which they may and will do, when they work themselves up to more energy and ardor, and feel more and more interest in the subject.

The Secretary, in his Report, after giving a description of the method of teaching the 'intellectual part of reading' in Scotland, goes on and says,—

'But all this, admirable in its way, was hardly worthy to be mentioned in comparison with another characteristic of the Scottish schools, viz: the mental activity with which the exercises were conducted, both on the part of teacher and pupil.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

'I do not exaggerate when I say, that the most active and lively schools I have ever seen in the United States must be regarded almost as dormitories, if compared with the fervid life of the Scotch schools; and, by the side of theirs, our pupils would seem to be hybernating animals just emerging from their torpid state, and as yet but half conscious of the possession of life and faculties.

'It is certainly within bounds to say, that there were six times as many questions put and answers given, in the



same space of time, as I ever heard put and given in any school in our own country. \* \* \* \* \*

‘I have said, that questions were put by the teacher with a rapidity almost incredible.

‘When once put, however, if not answered, they are rarely stated again in words. If the first pupil cannot answer, the teacher seldom stops to say “Next,” but, — every pupil having his eye on the teacher, and being alive in every sense and faculty, and the teacher walking up and down before the class, and gesticulating vehemently, with his arm extended, and accompanying each motion with his eye, — he points to the next and to the next, until, perhaps, if the question is difficult, he may have indicated each one in a section, but obtained an answer from none; then he throws his arm and eye around towards one side of the room, inviting a reply from any one, and, if still unsuccessful, he sweeps them across on the other side, — and all this will take but half a minute. Words being too slow and cumbrous, the language of signs prevails; and the parties being all eye and ear, the interchange of ideas has an electric rapidity. While the teacher turns his face and points his finger towards a dozen pupils consecutively, inviting a reply, perhaps a dozen arms will be extended towards him from other sections or divisions of the class, giving notice that they are ready to respond; and in this way a question will be put to a class, of fifty, sixty, or eighty pupils, in half a minute of time.

‘Nor is this all. The teacher does not stand immovably fixed to one spot, (I never saw a teacher in Scotland sitting in a school-room,) nor are the bodies of the pupils mere blocks, resting motionless in their seats, or lolling from side to side, as though life were deserting them.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘On reviewing a period of six weeks, the greater part of which I spent in visiting schools in the north and middle of Prussia and Saxony, (excepting of course the time occupied in going from place to place,) entering the schools to hear the first recitation in the morning, and remaining until the last was completed at night, I call to mind three things about which I cannot be mistaken.

‘In some of my opinions and inferences, I may have erred, but of the following facts there can be no doubt :—

‘1. During all this time, I never saw a teacher hearing a lesson of any kind (excepting a reading or spelling lesson) *with a book in his hand.*

‘2. I never saw a teacher *sitting*, while hearing a recitation. \* \* \* \* \*

‘During the above period I witnessed exercises in geography, ancient and modern; in the German language—from the explanation of the simplest words up to belles-lettres disquisitions, with rules for speaking and writing;—in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, surveying and trigonometry; in book-keeping; in civil history, ancient and modern; in natural philosophy; in botany and zoology; in mineralogy, where there were hundreds of specimens; in the endless variety of the exercises in thinking, knowledge of nature, of the world and of society; in Bible history and in Bible knowledge;—and, as I before said, in no one of these cases did I see a teacher with a book in his hand. His book,—his books,—his library, was in his head. Promptly, without pause, without hesitation, from the rich resources of his own mind, he brought forth whatever the occasion demanded.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘I have said that I saw no teacher *sitting* in his school—aged or young all stood.

‘Nor did they stand apart or aloof, in sullen dignity. They mingled with their pupils, passing rapidly from one side of the class to the other; animating, encouraging, sympathizing, breathing life into less active natures; assuring the timid, distributing encouragement and endearment to all.

‘The looks of the Prussian teacher often have the expression and vivacity of an actor in a play.

‘He gesticulates like an orator. His body assumes all the attitudes and his face puts on all the variety of expression, which a public speaker would do, if haranguing a large assembly on a topic vital to their interest.

‘It may seem singular, and perhaps to some almost ludicrous, that a teacher, in expounding the first rudiments of handwriting, in teaching the difference between a hair-

stroke and a ground-stroke, or how an *l* may be turned into *b* or a *u* into *w*, should be able to work himself up into an oratorical fervor; should attitudinise, and gesticulate, and stride from one end of the class to the other, and appear in every way to be as intensely engaged as an advocate when arguing an important case to a jury; — but, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true; and before five minutes of such a lesson had elapsed, I have seen the children wrought up to an excitement proportionally intense, hanging upon the teacher's lips, catching every word he says, evincing great elation or depression of spirits, as they had or had not succeeded in following his instructions. So I have seen the same rhetorical vehemence on the part of the teacher, and the same interest and animation on the part of the pupils, during a lesson on the original sounds of the letters, — that is, the difference between the long and the short sound of a vowel, or the different ways of opening the mouth in sounding the consonants *b* and *p*. The zeal of the teacher enkindles the scholars. He charges them with his own electricity, to the point of explosion.

‘Such a teacher has no idle, mischievous, whispering children around him, nor any occasion for the rod. He does not make desolation of all the active and playful impulses of childhood, and call it peace; nor, to secure stillness among his scholars, does he find it necessary to ride them with the nightmare of fear.

I rarely saw a teacher put questions with his lips alone. He seems so much interested in his subject, (though he may have been teaching the same lesson for the hundredth or five hundredth time,) that his whole body is in motion; eyes, arms, limbs, all contributing to the impression he desires to make; and at the end of an hour, both he and his pupils come from the work all glowing with excitement.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘In Prussia and Saxony, as well as in Scotland, the power of commanding and retaining the attention of a class is held to be a *sine qua non* in a teacher's qualifications. If he has not talent, skill, vivacity, or resources of anecdote and wit, sufficient to arouse and retain the attention of his pupils during the accustomed period of

recitation, he is deemed to have mistaken his calling, and receives a significant hint to change his vocation.'

Such, then, it would seem, are some of the peculiar qualifications of the Scotch, Prussian, and Saxon teachers — and we have found that, just so far as our teachers have possessed the elevating characteristics contained in the foregoing extracts, so far have they succeeded in securing the confidence and affection of the pupils, and also in inciting in them a love of school and a desire of learning. And such, we have sanguine expectations, and that at no very distant day, will be the *general* character of the teachers of our own country; already are these high and ennobling qualities in teachers beginning to be appreciated by the community. This is manifested in the anxious inquiries for 'good teachers;' and in the increased wages which they command.

## VOCAL MUSIC.

Vocal music has received attention in nine of our schools the past year; a greater number than that of any previous year. This is gratifying. We consider the introduction of this exercise as one of the most valuable improvements of our schools.

Who has not felt the sweet influences of music. And how refreshing must it be, to both teacher and scholar, to leave for an interval their cares and toils, and tune their voices in songs of joy and gladness. It must truly be a sweet respite; and they will return to their more anxious duties with renewed spirit and zest.

We were particularly pleased with the singing at Nos. 2, 3, 5, and 8. That of No. 5, was of a truly elevated character. Your committee have attended ticketed concerts with less satisfaction than they experienced while listening to the sweet strains of this school.

We hope that pains will be taken to introduce music into *all* our schools. The ability of a teacher to lead in singing adds much to his qualifications. But if this be wanting, very often there is some older scholar, who can measurably supply the deficiency. If so, let them be called in requisition. It will be a step in the progress of that school.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

Much has been said of late upon the necessity of adopting a higher standard of education. While the claims of intellectual culture have been maintained, the extreme importance of the *moral* element of education has been especially and very deservedly enlarged upon; and we indulge the hope that this has fallen upon good ground, and will spring up and bear fruit, whose steady increase shall be most gladdening to all. But profoundly impressed as they are with the necessity of a more thorough moral discipline, and not wishing in any way to divert attention from that pole-star of national and individual prosperity and happiness, your committee are impelled to call attention to another great evil; the very prevalent neglect of proper physical education, both at school and at home. They are aware that in our schools, as at present constituted, children cannot receive a *complete* and *thorough* course of training in their bodily powers and functions. They do not expect it. Such can only be the case in a system of education, in which the pupil shall be under the continued management of thoroughly enlightened instructors. But does it necessarily follow, that *no* attention should be given to the subject; no instruction given in the laws of life and health, our ignorance of which must often temporarily render of none effect all the tender cares bestowed upon our higher natures? We do not ask for the conversion of our schools into seminaries for the study of medicine; but we do ask and we should all demand that the first principles of health be there understood, and that at least there should be nothing pertaining to the school, the tendency of which is in any way to disease and death.

The feeble health and delicate constitutions of our people compared with that of our fathers, cannot have escaped the attention of any one; and that this enervation is increasing can hardly be less true. Will any one presume to say that this is the unalterable ordinance of heaven — that man is guiltless in the matter? Can any one in his

sober senses believe it the will of God, that more than one half of all the infants born into the world should be called to leave it before arriving at the age of ten years ; or that half of the remainder should be summoned to their final account by that ruthless destroyer, consumption ? The thought is impious.

How much rather is this the just retribution we have drawn upon ourselves, by a thoughtless disregard and violation of His most righteous laws, which were given for our guidance in this matter ; laws, wise and immutable, which we can no more violate with impunity, than can we His moral statutes. How much it behoves us, then, to awaken to an understanding of those laws ; how loud is the call for a dissemination of a better knowledge of the human constitution, and for a practice based upon more rational and consistent views of its capacity and design.

To parents and teachers this subject presents itself with peculiar force. They are responsible, directly and indirectly, for much of the sickness and suffering of future generations. And yet with what preparation do we meet the task ; how many understand ought of the mechanism, laws, and functions of the human frame.

We should think but meanly of the architect who should engage in erecting an edifice, splendid in its classic proportions of columns, frieze, pediment, and cornice, and embellished with the most elaborate ornaments, all in nice conformity to the perfect model, while he should leave entirely out of view the nature of his foundation, whether rock or quicksands, and wholly indifferent to the proportions of either. And yet, many of us, as parents and teachers, commit a worse mistake, in our ignorance of the physical system. We proceed at once to building the superstructure of a well disciplined mind, which shall grasp all truth, and of a cultivated heart, which shall be alive to all duty, while, too often, the foundation, the body, is left without thought or care.

There is not a teacher in the world, whether parent or pedagogue, whose province is so humble as not to need a thorough knowledge of the science of physiology. Those who understand these things would be more vigilant and

thoughtful in their treatment of those committed to their care. They would be more careful that they received proper food and drink, both in quality and quantity, and that they were suitably clad and guarded against the extremes of heat and cold. They would pay attention to cleanliness, both in their persons and in all around them, insisting upon frequent ablutions, and not being punctilious in confining that operation to the smallest *visible* space upon the face and hands. They would see to it that their children received the necessary bracing, vigorous out-of-door exercise, and this in preference to sending them toddling away to school at too tender an age, or at *any* age when considerations of health unite with the strong pleadings of nature for the invigorating concomitants of free air, green fields, and sunny lawns. They would take greater pains for a more thorough ventilation, knowing the impossibility of breathing the same heated atmosphere, without injury, great and serious, however long deferred.

They would send their scholars forth oftener from their confinement, especially those who are young and unable to study. They would guard at all times against currents of air, cold feet, and damp clothes. Such persons know that while many pupils need the spur to incite them to intellectual activity, there are others who as strongly require the curb;—that the pale-faced delicate little child who is all ambition, and applies himself to his studies without ceasing, is fast yielding to the power of disease; and unless his unnatural intellectual excitement is relieved, and his physical system built up and invigorated, he will but too soon inhabit the cold grave. They know that their pupils cannot sit for hours together upon hard and inconvenient benches, or in writing with one shoulder elevated above the other, without exposure to that fruitful source of modern disease, injury and distortion of the spine. They are aware of the injurious effects upon the eye by an injudicious exposure, while studying, to the glare of a window or lamp. They are enabled to perceive the safety or danger of different modes of punishment which are resorted to in discipline.

Those enlightened upon this subject, would not deem it out of their province to look to the sports of children



upon the play-ground, and see that they are of the proper kind, and promotive of the object in view.

They would not be too particular in squaring every motion to the exact boarding-school model, neither would they esteem it a duty to restrain the ebullition of happy feeling to just that quantity of sound which would be proper to the drawing-room; but, knowing the tendency to over action after long confinement, they would see that the exercises were not too violent, and would guard against imprudent exposures following their cessation.

In short, the faithful, conscientious teacher would feel constantly called upon for the exercise of his physiological knowledge. He would attend to a thousand circumstances which we in our ignorance or thoughtlessness entirely disregard, but the neglect of which is as surely productive of evil, as the pestilence that wasteth at noonday.

We would recommend most earnestly to all, the careful study of the works upon this subject of that eminent philosopher, Dr. Andrew Combe. Probably no writer upon kindred topics ever enjoyed so wide-spread or deserved popularity. He speaks of things which all should know, in a manner which all may understand. No one can peruse his pages without feeling more deeply the importance of the subjects on which he treats.

When we shall become fully awake to this matter, we may expect a great and manifest change in our habits and customs. Under the light of science our men will cease to be guided by the prejudices and conceits of pernicious fashion; and our women, in the more frequent green-wood and hill-side ramble, will forget the idea, that, to be pretty and 'interesting,' they must be pale, languid, and consumptive. Is it too much to say, that after a few generations shall have passed away, under a true and thorough bodily training, we may walk with comparative safety amid fever, pestilence, and plague, and ultimately assume the goodly inheritance of a truly patriarchal old age? Then shall we fulfil the end of our physical existence, and only cease from our labors when the measure of oil originally granted by our Creator, to feed the lamp of life, is fully exhausted. Let us, then, to the work.



## VISITS OF PARENTS AND OTHERS.

The whole number of visits to the summer schools, before the final examinations, as will be seen by reference to the table of summer schools, was 275; at the examinations, 433, — visits at the winter terms, 177, — at the examinations, 475. This is an increase of nearly 200 individual visits over last year.

While this tells well for the cause among us, as showing that it is steadily advancing, we hope the number will be still larger the coming year, and that parents will feel that the time spent in the school-room is not *misspent*. In this way they may learn whether their children are doing well or ill. In this way may they learn the necessity of such suggestions and improvements as the committee shall, from time to time, urge upon their consideration — be led to coöperate and sympathize with the teacher, and assist in every laudable endeavor to benefit the school. Much, very much depends on the course which parents take in this matter. Indifference tends only to chill the zeal of scholars, teachers, and Committees, — all need and have a right to expect your sympathy and aid. But if they do not receive it, if you virtually throw stumbling-blocks in the way, by permitting your children to be frequently tardy; by suffering some frivolous excuse to keep them from school one third or one half of the time, thus causing an interruption, not only to your own children, but to the progress of the whole school; by permitting the grievances of neighbors to interfere with the labors of the teacher; by making exaggerated and slanderous reports concerning the management of the school; by fostering a disorganizing spirit in districts; by opposing every plan which involves an increase of expense or efficiency; we say, if you permit any or all of these to exist, the interest in the cause will flag, and our schools fail of accomplishing that good which we have a right to expect.

In conclusion, your committee would congratulate the citizens of the town, that the interest in the cause is steadily advancing. While there is no diminution of

zeal in any, others are coming up to aid in this noble work. Parents are feeling more and more the necessity of exerting themselves to give their children that education which shall render them respected, useful, and happy. Teachers are beginning to feel that there is a vast responsibility attached to the office of training the youthful mind; that the impressions which they make on the plastic mind of childhood are indelible. That they are making a mark on the rising generation which can never be effaced. Every thing shows that the value of good instruction is already felt, and that a higher tone on this subject is beginning to prevail.

The patriot and Christian are beginning to realize the absolute necessity of educating the whole mass, — physically, intellectually, and morally, — if we would preserve from demolition that noble fabric erected by our forefathers with so much treasure and toil.

CALVIN J. PARKER,	}	<i>Superintending School Committee.</i>
DEXTER WHITTEMORE,		
JOHN J. ALLEN, JR.		

## TABULAR VIEW OF THE SUMMER SCHOOLS.

DISTRICTS.	1	2	3	4	5U	5U2	5L1	5L2	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Sm.	Total.
Whole No. of Scholars, .....	45	12	26	14	48	47	42	42	15	21	37	24	17	42	16	2	361*
Average daily attendance, .....	38	10	22 $\frac{3}{4}$	10	42	42	41	39 $\frac{7}{8}$	11	18	35	22	15	34	13 $\frac{3}{4}$		312
No. constant during the term, .....	14	7	3	3	17	10	10	16	2	5	14	4	4	6	4	1	93
Whole number of males, .....	20	5	8	5	21	20	19	19	6	9	17	15	10	21	4		161
“ “ females, .....	25	7	18	9	27	27	23	23	9	12	20	9	7	21	12	1	200
Number under 4 years of age, .....	1	1	4	4	15	14	10	7	9	5	5	1	1	5	2		29
“ from 4 to 10 years of age, .....	26	6	15	7	15	14	32	35	9	16	19	15	11	23	12		206
“ from 10 to 16 “ .....	18	5	11	3	33	33			6	5	13	9	5	12	2		122
“ 16 years and over, .....														2			2
Not belonging to the District, .....				3	3	3	3	2		5	1		7	4			26
Length of School — weeks, .....	8	8	10	9	8	9	8	8	15	6	9	5	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	6	6		119 $\frac{1}{2}$
† Weeks of absence — aggregate, .....	53	9	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	43 $\frac{1}{2}$	30	18	2	43	15 $\frac{1}{2}$	7	1	12	32	4		305 $\frac{1}{2}$
‡ Days of absence — aggregate, .....	31	17	116	25 $\frac{1}{2}$	56 $\frac{1}{2}$	102	115	93	136	62	67 $\frac{1}{2}$	43	65 $\frac{1}{2}$	91	40		1062
¶ Tardiness — times, .....	67	2	5	27	19	59	c	27	11	8	5	3	4	14	23		274
Number in Grammar, .....	7			1	19	18			2	2	2	2	2	3			
“ in Arithmetic, .....	16	7	19	7	44	42	5	5	6	12	20	11	8	13	10		
“ in Geography, .....	9	4	8	7	42	33	6	7	7	5	8	7	7	8	10		
“ in History, .....		3										3					
“ in Natural Philosophy, .....		2	3	1					7	7	12		5	11	7		
“ in Penmanship, .....	11	10	12	5					4	3	5	2	4	5	2		
“ in Composition, .....	11	3	8	2	17	16						2	2				
“ of Books deficient, .....	8	1	2	2													
Number of visitors before final Examination, .....	32	17	12	8	22	18	28	33	32	12	40	5	6		10		275
“ “ at final Examination, .....	69	10	30	29	19	58	15	30	8	27	73	15	19	10	21		433

## TABULAR VIEW OF THE WINTER SCHOOLS.

DISTRICTS.	6*												Total.
	1	2	3	4	5U.	5L.	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Whole No. of Scholars, . . . . .	66	19	47	17	74	43	23	50	31	17	39	22	4 452†
Average daily attendance, . . . . .	56	16	41½	12	59	35	20	43	22	15	30	17½	366
Number constant during the term, . . . . .	11	6	12	4	4	8	8	13	1	15	2	84	84
Whole number of males, . . . . .	39	10	21	8	38	20	11	25	22	10	19	8	239
Whole number of females, . . . . .	27	9	23	9	36	23	12	22	9	7	20	14	213
Number under 4 years of age, . . . . .				2				3		1	2		8
“ from 4 to 10 years of age, . . . . .	24	6	16	6		43	9	23	14	6	21	12	180
“ from 10 to 16 years of age, . . . . .	23	11	20	6	50		11	17	15	7	10	6	176
“ from 16 to 20 years of age, . . . . .	16	1	9	2	20		3	7	2	3	5	4	72
“ 20 years and over, . . . . .	3	1	2	1	4	1					1		12
Not belonging to the District, . . . . .			2		8			3	4		3		92
Length of School — weeks, . . . . .	10	10	10	7	12	6	8	12½	11	7½	5	6½	103
Weeks of absence — aggregate, † . . . . .	59½	23	24	12	126½	12	12½	83	63½	9½	11	23	398
Days of absence — aggregate, ‡ . . . . .	224	44½	187	38½	288	107	39	132½	89½	1½	234	34½	1413
Tardiness — times, . . . . .	57	33	37	36	164	60	13	6		7	94	30	537
Number in Grammar, . . . . .	17	3	11	1	41	1	6	2	3	2	6	4	
“ in Arithmetic, . . . . .	38	10	33	11	63	14	19	31	24	14	12	20	
“ in Geography, . . . . .	14	7	14	9	37	13	10	12	5	8	6	12	
“ in History, . . . . .		5	1						2	1		1	
“ in Natural Philosophy, . . . . .	6	2	5			7		1					
“ in Physiology, . . . . .					10								
“ in Algebra, . . . . .					5								
“ in Geometry, . . . . .					3								
“ in Penmanship, . . . . .	39	14	25	5	54		17	25	16	9	15	14	
“ in Composition, . . . . .	26	11	21	4	71		9	8	10	8	5	5	
“ of Books deficient, . . . . .	3		1					1		1		1	
Number of visitors before final Examination, . . . . .	29	14	18	4	40	8		41	18			5	177
“ “ at . . . . .	47	17	65	15	100	30	32	100	36	30	3	α	475
Male or female teacher, . . . . .	M.	M.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	F.	F.	M.	F.	

DISTRICTS.	Sm.									
	1	2	3	4	5 U. 5 L.	6	7	8	9	10
Amount of money apportioned to each District,*	85,92	59,73	82,31	39,48	277,12	16,17	47,32	78,38	35,57	34,65
Proportion of money to each scholar,	1,24	3,14	1,83	2,32	2,12	1,07	1,75	1,74	1,19	2,16
Wages of teacher per week — Summer,	1,75	1,25	1,75	1,50	2,25	1,00	1,50	1,75	1,25	1,50
“ “ Winter,	3,00	4,50	3,00	2,00	6,00	2,50	4,50	2,50	1,75	2,00
Price of Board — Summer,	1,17	gv'n	1,00	gv'n	1,17	gv'n	gv'n	1,00	92	1,05
“ “ Winter,	1,33	gv'n	83	1,25	1,38	1,17	gv'n	1,00	92	1,12
Cost of Fuel for the year,	4,25	2,11	1,56	3,00	8,00	3,00	3,00	2,00	2,00	gv'n
Amount of money raised by the town for the support of schools,										\$800,00
Assessment on a dollar of the valuation of the town, as appraised by the Selectmen, about										13 ms.
Amount of money required to be raised by law,										500,40
Amount of Literary Fund received by the town the past year,										50,19
Amount in full of money to each District, if divided equally,										70,85
Amount in full of money to each scholar, if divided equally,										1,76

\* Including the Literary Fund, which is four dollars and eighteen cents to each District, it being divided equally.  
† This includes only the money from Fitzwilliam; reckoning that from Troy would more than double the amount.  
*Notes on Summer Schools.* — In District No. 5, U. 1 denotes Upper School, 1st term. U. 2, Upper School, 2d term. L. 1, denotes Lower School, 1st term. L. 2, Lower School, 2d term. Sm. denotes Mr. E. Thayer Smith's family, who belong in No. 2, but it being inconvenient to attend there, they draw their money and join with a district in Jaffrey. \* About 12 of this number are reckoned twice by attending in more than one district. † Weeks in which a scholar did not attend at all. ‡ 15 of this number from scholars not of the district.  
§ 14 only of this number was from those belonging to the district.  
|| Only about 266 of this is chargeable to scholars in their own districts.  
¶ Casual absences, less than a week.  
a 13 of this number from those not of the district.  
b 51 of this number from those not of the district.  
c No account was kept this term.

*Notes on Winter Schools.* — In District No. 5, U. denotes the upper, and L. the lower school. Sm. denotes E. Thayer Smith, who belongs to No. 2, but it being inconvenient to attend there, he draws his proportion of money and unites with a district in Jaffrey.  
\* District united with one in Troy — under the supervision of that town in winter.  
† A few of these are reckoned twice by attending in different districts. The whole number of different scholars who have attended school in town within the year is, including Mr. Smith's family, 48; of which there were at Dist. No. 1, 69 — No. 2, 19 — No. 3, 45 — No. 4, 17 — No. 5, 131 — No. 6, 15 — No. 7, 27 — No. 8, 45 — No. 9, 30 — No. 10, 16 — No. 11, 44 — No. 12, 26 — Mr. Smith's family, 4.  
‡ Whole weeks in which a scholar did not attend at all.  
§ 50 of this number from those not of the district.  
|| Probably included in the days.  
¶ Casual absences less than a week.  
a Teacher left on account of sickness — no examination.



















